

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of annotating an image, said method comprising the steps of:

extracting a plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

associating each of the metadata labels in the list with at least one of a plurality of icons;

displaying the plurality of icons, each of the icons being labelled with one or more of the metadata labels with which the icon was associated;

displaying the image adjacent to the displayed plurality of labelled icons, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image;

detecting ~~one or more~~ a subject subjects within the image, using an image detection method, to form ~~one or more~~ an automatically placed bounded region within the image, ~~each said~~ the automatically placed bounded region substantially surrounding ~~at least one of~~ the detected subject subjects within said image;

adjusting the automatically placed bounded region by re-sizing, moving or erasing the bounded region based on user input;

~~forming one or more manually placed bounded region within the image in response to user input;~~

detecting selection of at least one of the displayed plurality of labelled icons;

dragging the selected icon to the image, such that ~~at least one of said automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~ is changed upon the selected icon being dragged over ~~the at least one of said automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~, in order to emphasize the ~~at least one of said automatically placed~~ adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~;

dropping the selected icon within ~~the at least one of said automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~, wherein the ~~at least one of said automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~ corresponds to a selected subject within the image;

linking the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon with a description of the location of the selected subject within the image; [[and]]

storing the linked one or more metadata labels and the description as an annotation of the image; and

replacing a default icon of the linked one or more metadata labels with an image of the selected subject, the image of the selected subject being extracted based on the adjusted bounded region.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the automatically placed bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is formed based on an analysis of pixels of the image.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein the analysis includes an analysis of the colour information of the pixels of the image.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the automatically placed bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is of a predetermined size.

6. to 10. (Cancelled).

11. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of extracting a part of the image based on the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject in response to receiving a user instruction via a graphical user interface.

12. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising a step of displaying the extracted part of the image in response to receiving a user instruction via the graphical user interface.

13. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein a size of the automatically bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is determined automatically.

14. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein a size of the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is changeable by a user via a graphical user interface.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the one or more metadata labels are stored as the annotation of the subject, and are displayed upon selecting the subject in the image.

16. to 17. (Cancelled).

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein said storing step includes storing the one or more metadata labels as the annotation of the subject of the image by using a tag indicating an association with the image.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the one or more metadata labels associated with the subject of the image are stored in an XML file.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of e-mailing at least the image to at least one e-mail address based on the one or more metadata labels associated with the image.

21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of replacing a default icon by the selected icon based on the subject of the image in response to receiving a user instruction via a graphical user interface.

22. (Cancelled).

23. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium storing a computer program, wherein said computer program comprises software code portions of performing a method of annotating an image, said program comprising:

code for extracting a plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

code for associating each of the metadata labels in the list with at least one of a plurality of icons;

code for displaying the plurality of icons, each of the icons being labelled with one or more of the metadata labels with which the icon was associated;

code for displaying the image adjacent to the displayed plurality of labelled icons, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image;

code for detecting ~~one or more~~ a subject subjects within the image, using an image detection method, to form ~~one or more~~ an automatically placed bounded region regions within the image, ~~each said automatically placed~~ the bounded region substantially surrounding ~~at least one of the detected~~ subject subjects within said image;

code for adjusting the automatically placed bounded region by re-sizing, moving or erasing the bounded region based on user input;

code for forming ~~one or more~~ manually placed bounded region within the image in response to user input;

code for detecting selection of at least one of the displayed plurality of labelled icons;

code for dragging the selected icon to the image, such that ~~at least one of~~ said ~~automatically~~ the adjusted placed bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~ is changed upon the selected icon being dragged over ~~the at least one of said~~ automatically placed the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~, in order to emphasize the ~~at least one of said automatically placed~~ adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~;

code for dropping the selected icon within ~~the at least one of said~~ automatically placed the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~, wherein ~~the at least one of said automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~ corresponds to a selected subject within the image;

code for linking the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon with a description of the location of the subject within the image; [[and]]

code for storing the linked one or more metadata labels and the description as an annotation of the image; and

code for replacing a default icon of the linked one or more metadata labels with an image of the selected subject, the image of the selected subject being extracted based on the adjusted bounded region.

24. to 25. (Cancelled).

26. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein the automatically placed bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is formed based on an analysis of pixels of the image.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 26, wherein the analysis includes an analysis of the colour information of the pixels of the image.

28. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein the automatically placed bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is of a predetermined size.

29. to 33. (Cancelled).

34. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, further comprising code for extracting a part of the image based on the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject in response to receiving a user instruction via a graphical user interface.

35. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 34, further comprising code for displaying the extracted part of the image in response to receiving a user instruction via the graphical user interface.

36. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein a size of the automatically bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is determined automatically.

37. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein a size of the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is changeable by a user via a graphical user interface.

38. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein the one or more metadata labels are stored as the annotation of the subject, and are displayed upon selecting the subject in the image.

39. and 40. (Cancelled).

41. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, further comprising code for storing the metadata labels as the annotation of the subject of the image by using a tag indicating an association with the image.

42. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 41, wherein the one or more metadata labels associated with the subject of the image are stored in an XML file.

43. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, further comprising code for e-mailing at least the image to at least one e-mail address based on the one or more metadata labels associated with the image.

44. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, further comprising code for replacing a default icon by the selected icon based on the subject of the image in response to receiving a user instruction via a graphical user interface.

45. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the description includes a location of the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject.

46. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the description includes a size of the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject.

47. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the automatically bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is formed at a location at which the selected icon is dropped on the image.

48. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 3, wherein a size of the automatically bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is determined based on the analysis.

49. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein only the linked one or more metadata labels and the description are stored as an annotation of the subject of the image.

50. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein the description of the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject includes a location of the bounded region within the image.

51. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein the description of the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected_subject includes a size of the bounded region.

52. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is formed at a location at which the icon is dropped on the image.

53. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 26, wherein a size of the adjusted bounded region corresponding to the selected subject is determined based on the analysis.

54. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 23, wherein only the linked one or more metadata labels and the description are stored as an annotation of the subject of the image.

55. (Cancelled).

56. (Currently Amended) A method of annotating an image, said method comprising the steps of:

extracting a plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

displaying a representation of each of the metadata labels in the list;

displaying the image adjacent to the displayed representations of metadata labels, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image;

detecting ~~one or more~~ a subject subjects within the image, using an image detection method, to form ~~one or more~~ an automatically placed bounded region regions within the image, ~~each said~~ the automatically placed bounded region substantially surrounding ~~at least one of~~ the detected subject subjects within said image;

adjusting the automatically placed bounded region by re-sizing, moving or erasing the bounded region based on user input;

forming one or more manually placed bounded regions within the image in response to user input;

detecting selection of at least one of the displayed representations of metadata labels;

dragging the selected representation to the image, such that ~~at least one of~~ said ~~automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~ is changed upon the selected representation being dragged over ~~the at least one of~~ said ~~automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~, in order to emphasize the ~~at least one of~~ said ~~automatically placed~~ adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~;

dropping the selected representation within ~~the at least one of~~ said ~~automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region ~~and said manually placed bounded region~~, wherein ~~the at least one of~~ said ~~automatically placed~~ the adjusted bounded region

~~and said manually placed bounded region~~ corresponds to a selected subject within the image;

linking the metadata label associated with the selected representation with a description of the location of the selected subject within the image; [[and]]

storing the linked metadata label and the description as an annotation of the image; and

replacing a default icon of the linked one or more metadata labels with an image of the selected subject, the image of the selected subject being extracted based on the adjusted bounded region.